

Pulaski County Master Minutes

April, 2006

<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>, <http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/>

Volume 17, Issue 3



Garden Gladiolus *

When I was a young girl I remember the beautiful gladiolus flowers in my mother's garden. It seemed all the southern ladies had these most beautiful flowers blooming during the summer. Each plant was a prize to my mom. The local churches would be filled with these lovely flowers during the summer. When I married in the middle of winter in a freezing snow storm in west Texas my flower of choice was the beautiful white gladiolus.

To quote Dr. Gerald Klingaman, retired Extension Horticulturist "Gladiolus are too common to be cool." Now just when did that happen? Some say it is because the flower is used at funerals and folks just don't like to be reminded of such things. That could be so I suppose, but I still love to see my beautiful gladiolus in the summer.*

The omission of gladiolus from the garden could be because of the short lived blossom. It seems that they just get started when it season is all over. Don't you think that is the way of most of our bulbs? I think they are worth the effort.

Gladiolus plants have been known since ancient times but it wasn't until the introduction of the African species into European gardens in the 18th and 19th century that hybridizers began to create the garden forms that we know today.

Gladiolus produce flower spikes in all the colors of the rainbow. These 3-4- foot tall plants are mostly grown as cut flowers. Most are hardy in our area.

Gladiolus like humsey medium wet well-drained soils in full sun. They adapt well to a wide range of soils except heavy soil. In zone 7-9 corms may be let in the ground year round, but will flower better if corms are dug up annually.

Corm size determines planting depth and spacing. Plant corms 2-6" deep, (2-3" for small corms and 5-6" inches for large ones and 4-6" apart. Provide constant moisture during growing season, especially during dry summer periods, and do not let dry out. After blooming, remove stems and leaves to reduce the possibility of disease. Corms may also be planted in a round bowl shaped area for effect. These plants are quite tall and will require some staking.

How about buying a few and giving them a try once again. They are truly beautiful and a real treat for your garden.



Happy Gardening, Susie Gillihan

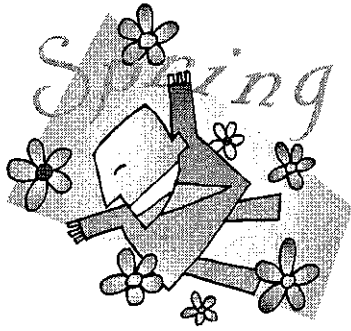
**Gerald Klingaman, retired
Extension Horticulturist
University of Arkansas*

**Garden Gladiolus*

*Latin: Gladiolus x hortulanus
Also called Sword Lily, Peacock Orchid*

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APRIL CALENDAR

The Margaret Phillips annual Dogwood Tour through the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest will be 9 a.m.-3 p.m. April 21 in Newton County. The tour departs the courthouse gazebo in Jasper by school bus and is hosted by the United States Forest Service. The tour covers about 80 miles and includes three or four stops along the way for short hikes and photo shoots. Bring a camera, walking shoes, and lunch. The tour costs \$5. More information is available from shuber@fs.fed.us or by calling (870) 446-5122.

Saline County Master Gardeners will host their fifth annual plant sale 8 a.m.-noon April 22 at the Saline County Fair Grounds in Benton. Janet Carson will be the guest speaker, and free soil testing will be available. Admission is free. For more information, contact Ron Matlock at rmatlock@uaex.edu or (501) 303-5672.

Mammoth Spring State Park and Mammoth Spring Garden Club will host its Herbfest and Plant Sale 8 a.m.-1 p.m. April 22. The event will include tours of the herb garden and free admission. More information is available by calling (870) 625-7364.

The National Arbor Day Foundation will conduct two April seminars at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas. "Hazard Trees" will be 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. April 25 and "Trees, People, and the Law" will be 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. April 26. The cost is \$125 per seminar or \$225 for both. More information is available at www.arboday.org/programs/conferences/tpl%2Dhazardtrees/, by telephone at (888) 448-7337, or e-mail at conferences@arboday.org.

The Pulaski County Master Gardeners' Social Committee will travel to Tulsa for May 9-11. Call Bob or Wanda Bray at (501) 753-4867 for cost, details, and deadlines.

The 2006 Arkansas Master Gardener Conference will be May 21-23 in Hot Springs. Registration continues

until April 30 and costs \$110. More information is available from Janet Carson, jcarson@uaex.edu.

Queen Wilhelmina State Park's April in Bloom <http://www.queenwilhelmina.com> will take place each weekend in April on Rich Mountain near Mena. The weekends will include guided hikes, demonstrations, and other programs focusing on wildflowers, songbirds, and butterflies native to the mountain. More information is available by calling (479) 394-2863.

Bull Shoals-White River State Park near Lakeview will host Ozark Springtime Wildflower Weekend April 21-23. Activities will include guided wildflower walks, Earth Day Garden Clean-up, children's programs, and evening slide shows. Admission is free. For more information, telephone (870) 431-5521.

St. Louis Herb Society's fourth annual Herb Weekend will be 9 a.m.-5 p.m. April 21-23 at the Missouri Botanical Garden <http://www.mobot.org> in St. Louis. Contact the Missouri Botanical Garden for details.

The Memphis Botanic Garden will host "Spring's Best Plant Sale" 10 a.m.-5 p.m. April 21-22 and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. April 23. The sale will include perennials, annuals, tropicals, herbs, shrubs and trees, and orchids grown in the botanic garden's volunteer greenhouse. Memphis Botanic Garden staff and local Master Gardeners will be available to assist with purchases and give plant care tips. More information is available by calling (901) 685-1566 Ext. 130.

Mammoth Spring State Park in Mammoth Spring will conduct its Herbfest & Plant Sale 8 a.m.-1 p.m. April 22. The event will include tours of the herb garden and Mammoth Spring Garden Club members will answer questions about herbs and local garden plants of the area. Admission is free. For more information, telephone (870) 625-7364.





DeGray Lake Resort State Park <http://www.degray.com> near Bismarck will host *Beaks, Bills, Feathers and Quills* April 28-30. Beginning birdwatchers can learn more about wild birds and what they need for food and habitat with guided walks, evening programs, and bird watching lake tours. Bring your own binoculars and field guides or share those of the state park. More information is available by calling (501) 865-2801.

Ozark Folk Center, Mountain View, will host its annual *Heritage Herb Extravaganza* <<http://www.ozarkfolkcenter.com/events-calendar/special-events/default.asp?id=224>> May 5-6. Featured speakers will be Steven Foster, Susan Belsinger, Cheryl Wilks, and folk center gardeners. There will also be herb vendors and garden tours. Admission to *Heritage Herb Extravaganza* costs \$85 for two days or \$45 for one day before April 22; \$90 or \$50 after April 22.

In addition to the extravaganza, there will be a Mexican *Cinco de Mayo*-themed *Lavish Herbal Feast* on May 4. Call the Ozark Folk Center at (870) 269-3851 to register for the *Heritage Herb Extravaganza* and for cost information and reservations for the *Lavish Herbal Feast*.

Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs will conduct its annual *Spring Garden Tour* 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. May 6 and 7. Tours depart from Hillcrest Hall, Kavanaugh and Lee. Three of the featured gardens are in the Ferndale area and two are in Pleasant Valley. Also on the tour are the gardens of Little Rock landscape designer Chris Olsen. The tour costs \$15, free for ages 13 and younger. More information is available at HillcrestHall@aol.com or (501) 663-7515.

Dirt Diggers Garden Club of Ashdown and Grannie's Bloomers Nursery will host the fourth annual *Garden Swap* at 10:30 a.m. May 20 at Grannie's Bloomers Nursery just outside of Ashdown at 107 E. Seventh St., Jack's Isle, Millwood Lake. Anything garden-related - plants, seeds, bulbs, homemade art, or products from the garden -

is suitable for swapping. It is recommended that swappers bring their own table and chairs for their booth and a sign with the swapper's name, items for swap, and items wanted. A buffet luncheon prepared by the members of Dirt Diggers Garden Club will feature old-fashioned farm dishes, and swappers are encouraged to bring a covered dish for the luncheon. Garden Swap will also include games, hidden prizes, and door prizes. More information is available at bigred@arkansas.net or (870) 898-8515.

Several Pulaski County Master Gardeners have volunteered to do gardening segments on Channel 11's noon show, "Positively Arkansas." Pam Adams-Smith, Debra Redding, Phyllis Barrier and Susan Rose have either already done a segment or are scheduled for April. Phyllis did a vegetable gardening segment and shared the following recipe.

Pear and Walnut Salad

Use greens from your garden such as spinach or mixed spring lettuce for this salad. You can make and refrigerate the dressing up to a week ahead.

Salad Dressing

¼ cup of orange juice
2 tablespoons white wine or balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar or 1 packet sugar substitute
2 tablespoons olive oil
¼ teaspoon of salt

Salad:

4 cups of spinach or mixed salad greens
1 pear, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon orange juice
½ cup thinly sliced red onion, separated into rings
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted

Combine the salad dressing ingredients in a bowl and stir well with a whisk.

Divide the spinach or salad leaves evenly among 4 salad plates. Toss pear slices with the one tablespoon of orange juice. Divide the pear and onion evenly over the greens. Top each serving with the walnuts and drizzle with the dressing. Makes 4 servings.

Salad variations:

You can add one tablespoon of crumbled goat cheese or blue cheese to each salad plate if desired.

Sliced apple is a nice substitute for the pear.

Orange segments with sliced avocado are also a good substitute for the pear.



PULASKI COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS Board Meeting Highlights

The Pulaski County Master Gardeners' Board met on Wednesday, March 15, 2006 at 11 a.m. at the home of Sandy Harrison. Present were Dick Blankenbeker, Merilyn Tilley, Jackie Wright, Sandy Harrison, Don Davis, Jim Dyer, Jet Cuffman, Mary Freeman, and Beth Phelps. Chair, Sandy Harrison, presided.

- The minutes were approved as circulated.
- Treasurer, Mary Freeman, reported that February was slow. Expenses came close to the same figure as deposits. We are \$707.17 ahead of last month. Our balance is \$20,201.55. Sixty per-cent of the dues are paid. The report was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

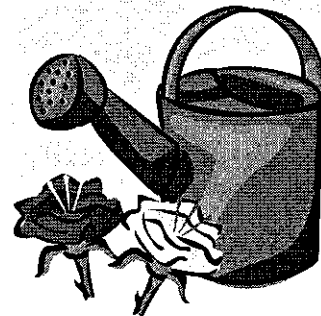
- The penalty for late-payment of dues was reconsidered. Jett moved that because the ByLaws provide that the due date for dues is May 1, the \$5 penalty for reinstatement will attach after that date. Jackie seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- Beth, Don, Dick, Dotty and Sandy met at the Jacksonville Greenhouse. They reported what they saw and a general discussion followed.
- Trudy Kumpe will investigate the Pictorial Directory possibilities.

NEW BUSINESS

- The Pinnacle Project made a special funding request of \$150, \$30 for Carl Hunter's book and the rest for the garden. Don moved the request be granted. Jim seconded the motion. It carried.
- The County 76 committee announced a new Master Gardener award category, "Rookie of the Year." There was a general discussion about the award, but no action was taken.
- Don requested that some action be taken toward long range planning for the PCMG. Don and Beth will meet and come up with a plan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Upcoming Garden Tours and Seminars: LR council of Garden Clubs, May 6 & 7; Quapaw Quarter Gardens, May 7th; North Little Rock Laman Public Library programs on gardening March 25, April 15, May 6, June 17, July 15, and August 12.
- Beth expressed her appreciation for volunteers to help our new telephone volunteers, and volunteers who process soil samples for shipment.



Pulaski County Master Gardener Meetings' Highlights By Jackie Wright

The Pulaski County Master Gardeners met on Tuesday, March 21, 2006 at 11:30 a.m. at St. James Methodist Church. Chair, Sandy Harrison, presided. She made the following announcements:

- We have a new member, Carolyn Rush, former Perry County Master Gardener.
- Tom Merton thanks the volunteers who work at the extension office preparing soil samples.
- Ray Sarmiento was selected "Volunteer of the Year" by the Arkansas Flower and Garden Show Board.
- PCMG members talked about gardening on a local TV show, "Positively Arkansas." It airs at 12 noon on KTHV, ch. 11. Pam Adam-Smith, March 6th and Debra Redding on March 20th.
- Dick Blankenkemper will be interviewed on KUAR Public Radio, FM 89.1, for the show, "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. Bob Byers, from Garvan Gardens, will also be on the show. It will air on the 3rd Tuesday during evening drive-time.
- Alan Hall was thanked for contributing Muscadine Jelly for last month's door prize.

Committee Reports:

- Social: Wincie Hughes announced that the Spring Picnic will be a fish fry, on May 11 from 6 to 8:30 at Aldersgate. Cost per person is \$12.50. Bring a plant for exchange.
- Travel: Bob Bray announced that the Dallas trip did not make. The committee is planning a trip to Northwest Arkansas and Northeast Oklahoma on May 9-11. They will be back in time for the picnic. Cost will be \$220 to cover travel by USA Coach and two nights at the Hampton Inn in Tulsa, OK. The trip needs 20 travelers by April 12.
- Greenhouse: Lois Corley announced that there will be plant sales on April 15 and on April 29 from 8 to 11 a.m.

- 3 Ps will gather after the meeting. David Werling asked for photos projects.
- Ray Sarmiento and Mary Evans thanked the members for their volunteer efforts at the garden show. More than 1,000 hours were contributed. There were 13 gardens and the booths were sold out.
- Steve Lopata asked for volunteers for the Little Rock Council of Garden Clubs garden tour on May 6-7.

Beth could not attend the meeting.

Announcements were made by Vice-President Marilyn Tilley

- Dues for 2006 should be paid by the end of this month. Letters will be sent to those who fail to do so. Our dues money is used to offset newsletter expenses and to support our projects.
- Check the announcement board and calendar in the Master Minutes for special events.
- Put your work days on the chart
- The Master Gardener State Meeting is in Hot Springs, May 21-23, 2006. Registration forms are available on-line at the MG website or Beth can e-mail them. Hard copies are available on request. There are only a few places left.
- Garland County MG is planning a trip to Memphis to hear Michael Duer speak about hydrangeas. Information has been e-mailed to PCMG members.
- The Scholars Garden committee will meet after this meeting.

Program: Jim Dyer introduced Bob Byers who gave a slide presentation and talk about Garvan Gardens.

Astilbe

Lack of beauty in the original Chinese flowers probably led to this plant's name. Astilbe comes from the Greek a (without) and stilbe (brilliance). The common names are astilbe, and sometimes spirea, The botanical name is Astilbe of the Saxifragaceae family. It's sometimes spirea because it looks somewhat like Aruncus spirea. Plant names generally are pretty descriptive but this one evidently fell short of anyone's concept of beauty during the naming process. However, today's hybrids of red, pink and white are anything but dull and can be a treasured addition to the garden landscape.

Adaptable to almost any setting this plant is also quite versatile and can add a wonderful impact to any garden. Reaching skyward the astilbe adds another landscape dimension where ground cover or other low growing plants are used. This perennial has a basal clump of bright, glossy leaves which support strong stems of feathery plumes or tight spikes containing hundreds of tiny florets of green, bronze or red. Blooming time and color varies with the species and cultivar and if you choose carefully your astilbes can bloom from early summer through fall. Their dried seed heads add that special spot of color during the colder months and remind the gardener how some plants can delight every season of year.

They resist disease and insects but light shade and plenty of moisture is a must for the astilbe. An organic soil with lots of leaf mold, compost and plenty of good food are also necessary for optimum plant health. One application of a timed-release granular fertilizer can satisfy them so they are relatively low-maintenance.

Additional options in fragrance, flower color height and bloom time are available to the gardener. Some of the lowest growing and compacts are hybrids of the Japanese Astilbe

simplicifolia. The Pumila has lavender pink blooms and has a spreading habit of about 12 inches. Or you might try "Sprite" as another ground cover in light pink. Maybe you are looking for a really tall plant to make your garden statement. If so, try the tallest of the genus, Astilbe taquetti "Superba" which grows a good 4 feet tall with purple rose flowers.

An astilbe can be found for most every need the gardener has for that lightly shaded, well-drained spot in the landscape. Additional color and size choices increase every year so stroll through your local garden centers and nurseries and make a choice. You won't regret giving this plant garden room.



*"What a wond'rous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Insnar'd with flowers, I fall on grass."*

*Andrew Marvell (1621-1678)
From the Garden*



Checklist By Linda Moyer

Annuals

- Harden off summer bedding plants. Slowly acclimate to outside conditions.
- After spring blooming plants bloom, prune as needed. These include forsythia, camellias, azaleas, spring blooming spireas, and dogwoods.

Indoors -

- Keep your houseplants indoors until the middle or end of the month. Then slowly acclimate them to the sun. Otherwise, they can sunburn.
- If any overwintered tropical blooming plants, like Mandevilla, has weak and spindly stems, they should be pruned.

Lawns

- Apply fertilizer after your lawn is completely green.
- Clip back established ground cover. Repair dead patches in ground cover by tearing them out. Add compost and peat moss into the soil then replant bare areas with divisions taken from outer edges.
- If you plan to start a new lawn from seed, prepare the soil now. Rake the surface level and add a general fertilizer.
- Aerate and feed lawns with a high nitrogen fertilizer from April to September for greener grass. Use a spreader to ensure even coverage.
- Water lawns regularly.

Perennials & Bulbs

- Leave foliage on spring bulbs at least 6 weeks or until they die back. They need to replenish their strength for next year.
- Check for thrips on your daffodils. If you find infestation, remove and destroy the infested part.
- If you are shopping the garden centers for young perennial plants this time of the year. Look for the ones that have the fullest, sturdiest growth and the best foliage color. You will find either divisions or spring-sown seedlings. The divisions may be more expensive but they do produce larger plan the first year.

Roses

- For roses that only bloom in the spring, prune if needed, after plants blooms.

Trees & Shrubs

- Keep a close eye on fruit trees for pests this time of year. Follow a regular spraying program.
- After spring blooming plants bloom, prune as needed. These include forsythia, camellias, azaleas, spring blooming spireas, and dogwoods.

Vegetables & Herbs

- Cool season crops, like lettuce and English peas, can be planted until the middle of the month.
- Some people start planting their tomatoes at the first of April, but it is better to wait until at least the middle of the month.
- Be sure to rotate vegetable crops every year for three years to help control pests.

Monthly Blooms

_Ajuga, golden alyssum, anemone, anise Florida, azaleas, red-leafed barberry, bellis, beauty bush, bleeding heart, red buckeye, calycanthus, candytuft, clematis, columbine, coral bells, daffodils, English daisies, daylilies, deutzia, dianthus, dogwood, epimedium, foam flower, forget-me-nots, fringe tree, fritillaria, grass pinks, heather, bearded iris, yellow jessamine, kerria, leopard's bane, lilacs, lily-of-the-valley, lunaria, lungwort, maple, meadow rue, mertensia, mock orange, moneywort, muscari, oxalis, pansies, peonies, phlox, polemonium, primroses, ranunculus, rosemary, roses, sage, St. John's Wort, scilla campanulata, Scotch broom, shooting star, snowflake, Solomon's seal, spireas, styrax japonica, tamarisk, thrift, Tradescantia, trillium, tulips, viburnum carlesi, viburnum opulus sterile, viburnum tomentosum, vinca, violas, wild violets, weigela, and sweet William.

Linda Moyer writes a monthly column and feature articles for the Master Minutes. She is also active on the Jacksonville City Hall Committee with her husband, Mike.

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE

Through the Grapevine is a monthly exchange of ideas, websites, and recipes, for and by Master Gardeners. E-mail tips and tidbits to laurie.pierce@arkansas.gov or look for the grapevine clipboard at the monthly meeting.



What Works!

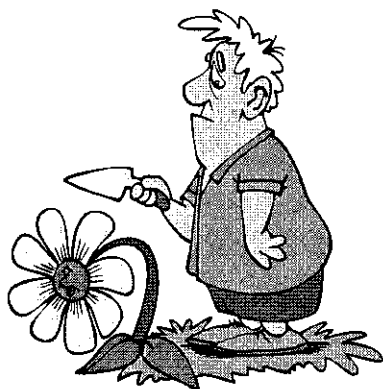
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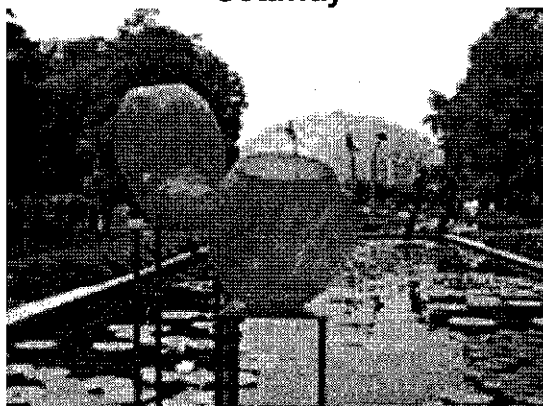
Websites

Carolyn K. Nagel, PCMG class of 2005, tells us of two catalog web sites that are both visually beautiful to visit, but offer very different levels of customer service. She placed an order from the Brent and Becky's Bulbs website, but the bulbs smelled bad. She called the customer service number and was told, "Well, what have you done wrong?" But a recent online order with White Flower Farms went much better: Carolyn had called about her order and happened to mention the pair of deciduous hollies she had ordered more than five years ago had never produced berries. "We must of have sent you the wrong male for your female holly," they said. "Let me send you the right male."

Five years after the fact – now that's customer service!



Dale chihuly's organic glass Win a "Glass in the Garden" St. Louis Getaway



Glass in the Garden: Chihuly at the Missouri Botanical Garden, through October 31, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Mo. A stunning exhibition of colorful, abstract glass sculptures inspired by nature and custom designed by Chihuly for the Garden, showcased outdoors and inside the glass-domed Climatron rain forest. Extra admission charge to enter the Climatron. On display during regular Garden hours and 'Chihuly Nights' on Thursdays (special event admission charge). Presented by Emerson. More details TBA.

Imagine walking through a tropical rainforest where fine art is intertwined with nature...where colorful glass sculptures help form a dramatic greenhouse gallery. For the first time ever in St. Louis, visitors can experience the Missouri Botanical Garden's "Glass in the Garden: Chihuly at the Missouri Botanical

Garden. "Glass in the Garden" will be showcased within the natural landscapes of one of St. Louis' most historic and popular cultural attractions.

The Garden's Climatron conservatory is the world's first geodesic dome to enclose a rain forest. From April 30 through October 31, 2006, the site will become a "glass under glass" gallery with stunning glass sculptures placed among thousands of exotic tropical plants.

Chihuly's style is immediately identifiable by monumental abstract sculptures or intensely colorful, fluid and organic forms, and complex groupings of many pieces. The artist enjoys an international reputation for using glass as a fine art medium. Chihuly's creations are found in more than 200 museums worldwide.

The St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission is proud to offer a "Glass in the Garden" St. Louis getaway package. Register online at www.ExploreStLouis.com between now and April 12, 2006 for your chance to win. Winner will be notified via email.

The prize package includes:

- Two night stay at the **Adam's Mark Hotel** in downtown St. Louis
- Two tickets valid for admission to the Missouri Botanical Garden and its special exhibit "**Glass in the Garden**"
- Lunch for two at the Missouri Botanical Garden's **Sassafras Café**
- Gift certificate to the **Third Degree Glass Factory** to create your own glass paperweight – Third Degree is St. Louis' only public access glass studio
- Two passes to the **Contemporary Art Museum Saint Louis**
- Tour the **Saint Louis Art Museum's** free exhibit **Louis Comfort Tiffany** – Featuring 30 exquisite pieces, this one-gallery exhibition includes Tiffany's

stunning "Lotus, Pagoda Lamp," with a shade inspired by the lotus flower's foliage and a bronze base evoking the plant's stems and roots.

Afterward, enjoy brunch for two at **Puck's**, the Wolfgang Puck café at the Art Museum.

- A trip to St. Louis wouldn't be complete without a tram ride for two to the top of the gleaming gateway arch

The Climatron® geodesic dome and rainforest conservatory was dedicated 40 years ago in October 1960, replacing an old house built in 1913. The structure incorporates principles established by innovative architect R. Buckminster Fuller and was the first application of geodesic engineering for a greenhouse. The St. Louis architecture firm of Murphy & Mackey developed plans for the facility with Garden director Frits W. Went, who coined the term, Climatron.

The dome is 70 feet high and 175 feet in diameter, permitting tall palm trees to tower majestically above the tropical vista of streams, waterfalls and 1,200 different species of exotic trees and plants. Temperature ranges from 64 to 74 degrees and average humidity is 85 percent.

Visitors can enjoy a sense of being in a jungle while making their way by orchids, passion flowers, hibiscus flowers, cycads and a number of endangered species. In 1976, the dome was named one of the 100 most significant architectural achievements in United States history.

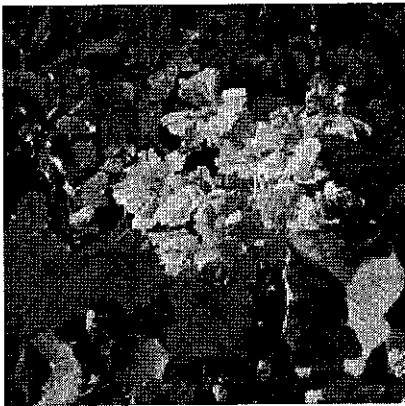
The Garden, covering 75 acres, is located at 4344 Shaw Blvd, just south of Hwy 44 between Vandeventer and Grand. Extended summer hours are 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Free parking on premises, as well as an extensive gift shop and restaurant with patio dining. For more information, call the GardenLine at 314-577-9400 or 800-642-8842.

Guide to Edible Flowers from msn.com and Better Homes and Gardens

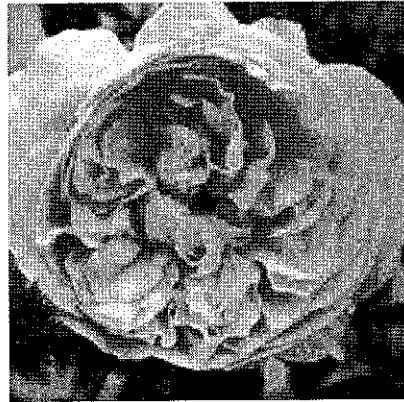
Popular Options

Although edible flowers have become common garnishes in restaurants, it's important to know what you're putting into your mouth. Not all flowers are edible, and not all food purveyors are aware of the potential toxicity of some. The most common (and safest) edible flowers are nasturtium, pansy, violet, Johnny-jump-up, calendula, chives and sage. These flowers are easily grown without the use of chemicals or pesticides. Many roses are delicious, but you need to be sure they are grown organically. A good rule of thumb is: If you cannot positively identify a flower as edible, don't eat it.

Pansies **span every color of the rainbow, so you can have fun decorating food. Plan a party months ahead and grow pansies to match your decor, best outfit or favorite color. Their flavor is slightly minty.**



Nasturtiums **may be vivid yellow, orange or red as well as muted tones and bicolors. Both the leaves and the flowers have a peppery flavor and are best eaten uncooked. Toss petals into salads.**



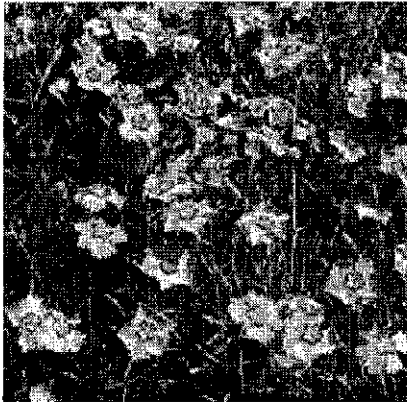
Roses **may be tasteless, sweet, perfumed or slightly spicy. Chop the petals and mix with sugar. Let the mixture infuse for a week and use for baking and desserts.**



Borage's **star-shape blossoms practically fall off the plant when they are ready to eat. They have a mild cucumber flavor that is delicious in lemonade.**



Tulips have a wonderful crunch—especially at the base of the petals. The flavor ranges from pea- to beanlike. Use tulip petals as a low-calorie substitute for chips with dip.



Lilacs are another variable flower, with a grassy taste or a delightful perfumed flavor. Use in chicken dishes

Guidelines

Pinks and other dianthus have a sweet clovelike taste. Do not eat whole—remove individual petals. Infuse petals in water for tea, or top a cracker



If you have asthma, hay fever or other allergies, do not eat flowers. Remove the pistils, anthers and stamens before eating any flowers.

Never eat flowers from a nursery, garden center or florist; they are likely to have chemical residues that concentrate in the flowers.

Flower flavors vary with variety (20 different roses will all taste somewhat different) and with growing conditions. As with any herb or spice, you may not like the flavor of all flowers—that's OK.

'Tangerine Gem' marigold and the other Gem hybrids are the only good tasting marigolds, with a citrusy tarragon flavor. Use petals in deviled eggs.

Edible flowers:

- Apple
- Anise hyssop
- Bee balm
- Broccoli
- Chamomile
- Chives
- Dandelion
- Daylilies
- Hollyhock
- Honeysuckle
- Mustard
- Pineapple guava
- Pineapple sage
- Rosemary
- Sage
- Scented geraniums
- Sweet Woodruff
- Thyme
- Tuberous begonias
- Violets
- Yucca

Officer Profile: First Vice-President Merilyn Tilley

By Betty Deere

First VP Merilyn has been a Master Gardener for five years. Responding to the questions of what motivated her to become a MG, she quipped: "It was that green shirt! But of course I'm joking." Actually when she visited both public and private gardens, she was inspired by the Master Gardeners work there and enjoyed visiting with them. "My sister, who lives in Tulsa and I decided to become Master Gardeners about the same time and we enjoyed sharing information about our different programs. I have made great friends in this program."

Merilyn grew up in a military family, spent her early years in Alexandria, VA, and finished high school in Puerto Rico. Later she married Steve, a family practice physician, moved to Little Rock, and taught Spanish and math until they started their family. She is the proud mother of two grown sons now, one a physician in Denver and the other an attorney in Dallas. After the boys started to school, she worked in Steve's office until about three years ago.

When asked what kind of gardening she does at home, Merilyn joked: "I grow rocks, and I grow them well." She went on to explain that her gardening site in Foxcroft is a steep and rock hill. In her garden she is interested in "those plants that are unusual, those that weep, contort or are simply odd. Well, not really odd, I just liked old fashioned shrubs, peonies, and native trees."

An accomplished gardener, Merilyn has been on the board of the AR Flower and Garden show for the past three years. She says "Seeing gardens is a great reason to travel, and I belong to the Garden Conservancy and try to participate in their "Open Days" program each year." She is also co-chair of the State Hospital Project.

Favorite Flowers: "I don't really have a favorite, but I like this Compacta Holly that I bought at the Flower and Garden Show. It is shaped like a rabbit. And I have a Dove tree and a Franklin tree I'm especially proud of."

Hobbies & Other Interest: "I like knitting, decorative painting, gardening and reading."

Favorite Reading: "Gardening books and historical fiction are mostly what I read. I'm currently reading "The Many Lives of Josephine B". I've just finished re-reading "To Kill A Mockingbird."

Favorite Food: "I don't really have a favorite food, but it might be Mexican food if I had to say."

What Makes Me Laugh: "Chipmunks running around like mad in my backyard right now."



Classifieds

Master Gardener Picnic
Thursday, May 11th
6:30-8:30
Camp Aldergate Pavillion
\$12.50 per person



Plant Exchange
Everyone bring a plant labeled with the
common/botanical name, growth
conditions, etc to swap

"Show Me The Money"

Dues for 2006 are due now.
Make your checks payable to PCMG.
Dues are \$15 per person.
Please pay at monthly meeting or
mail check to:
Mary Freeman
16301 Faulkner Lake Road
North Little Rock, AR 72117

Need education hours?

Research a new plant for your garden, and
then submit your research to the Master
Minutes. We will write the article; or if you
write it up, you earn education hours as well
as volunteer hours. Master Minutes Staff

Dig In Here...

For answers to your gardening and
horticultural problems, try these helpful
resources:

- Master Gardener Website:
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org/mastergardener/mastergardenersonly>
Username: mastergardener, password: compost
- PC Cooperative Extension Website:
<http://www.uaex.edu/pulaski/mastergardeners/default.asp>
- U of A Cooperative Extension Website:
<http://www.arhomeandgarden.org>
- Pulaski County Cooperative Extension
Service
2901 W. Roosevelt Road,
Little Rock, Ark. 72204
340-6650



Pulaski County Master Gardeners
are trained volunteers working with the
University of Arkansas Cooperative Service
and Pulaski County Government to provide
demonstration gardens and horticultural –
related information to the residents of the
county. In 2003, these volunteers gave more
than 10,000 hours of service.
Elisabeth J. Phelps, County Extension Agent,
Staff Chair

News & Notes

Everyone is encouraged to submit interesting
information, committee reports, newsworthy
photos, etc. to the newsletter.
Bring your information to the Master
Gardener meeting, or send it to:

Jennice Ratley
22 Coble Hill Road
Little Rock, Ark. 72211
jenniceratley@sbcglobal.net
217-9671

The deadline is the second Friday of each
month. For late breaking news after the
deadline, send information to:

Beth Phelps
Pulaski County CES
2901 W. Roosevelt Road
Little Rock, Ark. 72204
bphelps@uaex.edu
340-6650

Interested in receiving our
newsletter via the web?
Over the next few months
we will be working towards
providing the monthly
newsletter online for those
with email access.

Not only will it save our
programs money in
postage, but it will enable
us to enjoy our newsletter
in color.

Email Jennice to put your
name on the list! Details to
come!



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